

## HIGHER PRESENT NET VALUE ALTERNATIVES

Net public benefit (NPB) is the overall long-term value of all benefits less all associated costs. Many priced benefits and all financial costs of management can be measured in dollars. However, other nonpriced public concerns, benefits, and negative effects cannot be fully valued in economic terms.

The future value to society of this Forest will depend upon the mix of economic and other values that are produced and the costs of managing the Forest to produce these values. In determining the most economically efficient alternative, the Forest uses an estimate of present net value (PNV). PNV is the sum of priced benefits minus the sum of costs for the 150-year planning horizon, discounted to the present.

Emphasizing responses to issues that focus on nonpriced outputs reduces net economic values, principally because of reductions in the timber production land base. Timber is the main component of PNV. Land allocations to backcountry recreation, research natural area, and designated wildlife habitat management areas reduce the area for programmed timber harvest.

The selected alternative has a PNV of 257 million dollars. The following alternatives have a higher PNV than the selected alternative.

Alternative	Present Net Value (PNV)
No Change	382
B-Modified	351
F	328
A	300

382  
257  
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125

Present net value does not include all costs and benefits. Some of the more important nonpriced benefits include local community stability, ecosystem diversity, and habitat for wildlife species. Monetary values have not been assigned to these benefits, but the costs of providing community stability, ecosystem diversity, and wildlife habitat are reflected in this analysis.

Based on this, present net value is not the only criterion used in selecting an alternative. Also used was the maximization of net public benefits, which includes both the net value of priced outputs and consideration of the nonpriced outputs. Although the selected alternative has a lower PNV than alternatives listed above, it provides greater overall net public benefits. In recognizing the importance of the Malheur National Forest to local and national economies, it provides higher overall benefits, valuing the importance of nonpriced attributes such as water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, scenic values, and recreation. The selected alternative is sensitive to both economic and environmental issues, striking balance among commodity and amenity values.

The selected alternative is more responsive to public concerns expressed during the comment period than any of those alternatives having higher monetary values. It includes more acreage in the semiprimitive management areas, thus reducing the base of land from which timber sales are allocated. Consequently, the PNV is lower. More amenity uses of the Malheur National Forest were increased partly in response to numerous public comments on the DEIS.

Another issue that generated public comments is riparian area management. The selected alternative addresses this concern through assignment of key stream classes to a more restrictive riparian management prescription. This also reduces PNV by limiting timber harvest in those areas.

Timber production and the local economy have been important issues to weigh in selecting the Forest Plan alternative. Due to the structure of the local economy and the Malheur National Forest's position in that marketplace, the two issues can be addressed together. Many would like to have the harvest levels of Alternative B-Modified, but few people want to see a dramatic change in the visual character of landscapes appear on the Malheur National Forest that would result from Alternative B-Modified timber harvest level

In the final assessment, I believe that Alternative I is more responsive to the issues raised during the analysis process, and in the long run will result in the highest net public benefits.

## **ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERABLE ALTERNATIVE**

An environmentally preferable alternative causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment and protects, preserves, and enhances the historic, cultural, and natural resources. All alternatives considered in detail satisfy legal and environmental standards except the No Change Alternative, which does not satisfy NFMA management requirements.

The environmentally preferable alternative is Alternative C-Modified. This alternative schedules less intense development activity, retains more acres in an unroaded and undeveloped condition, and programs less ground disturbing activity during the 10 to 15 year life of the Forest Plan, than is programmed in Alternative I.

Additional information on the environmentally preferable alternative and all of the alternatives considered is disclosed in the final EIS, CHAPTER II.

I did not select the environmentally preferable alternative, because:

- It does not achieve a reasonable balance between concerns for maintaining environmental quality and satisfying the demand of society for commodity and non-commodity outputs from the Malheur National Forest.
- It fails to favorably respond to the timber supply needs of purchasers in the planning area.
- The Forest Plan has a more positive response to issues and concerns contributing to local economic stability, providing a timber supply, and contributing to maintaining the existing population, land uses, employment opportunities, and developed and roaded recreations opportunities than is provided by the environmentally preferable alternative.

Alternative I, the Forest Plan, recognizes and provides for landscape, resource, vegetation, and animal diversity through the land use allocation pattern displayed in the FEIS, MAP PACKET - Alternative I.

Alternative I, the Forest Plan, provides appropriate environmental safeguards at an acceptable direct economic cost. This alternative incorporates the perspective that the Forest Service is the trustee of the environment for succeeding generations. I believe Alternative I provides for the proper and continued use and development of the Malheur National Forest resources in a manner that maintains economic stability, yet retains local natural heritages, such as fish and wildlife habitat, water quality and quantity, outdoor recreation opportunities, scenic quality, and open range.

This Forest Plan has been developed with public participation, which included involvement, coordination, and comments from Federal, State, and local agencies including the Oregon State Governor's Office, the Oregon

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State Department of Wildlife, the Oregon State Department of Fisheries, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Oregon State Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Burns Paiute Tribes, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Columbia River Inter-tribal Fish Commission, the affected County Commissioners, representatives of city governments, industry groups, special interest groups, and individuals.

Extensive efforts were made to ensure that the selected alternative considered the goals of other public agencies and of Native American tribes

I believe Alternative I is compatible with and complimentary to the goals of other agencies and Native American tribes. Comments and letters from agencies and Native American tribes were reviewed extensively and actions taken to address their concerns

Coordination with many agencies, groups, and individuals will continue as projects are implemented.